



Arlington Council on Aging

Agenda

Date: Thursday May 20, 2021 Time: 6:00 pm

Location: Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom, following the rules set forth by the Governor's Executive Order on Remote Participation. These meetings are open to the public and all are welcome. Please call 781-316-3401 or e-mail KShah@town.arlington.ma.us for the link to join the virtual meeting which can be accessed by computer with internet access or by telephone for audio access only.

Kristine Shah, Executive Director

Michael Quinn, Chair

Marge Vanderhill, Secretary

The Council's primary responsibilities are to design, promote, and implement programs and services to address the needs of the community's elder population, and to coordinate existing services in the community.

1. Call to order
 - a. Welcome Steve DeCoursey, COA Select Board Liaison
2. Citizen's Open Forum
3. Minutes of the April, 2021 meeting for approval
4. Executive Director's Report
5. Report of the Chair
6. Minuteman Senior Services Report
7. ASA Liaison Report
8. Old Business
9. New Business
 - a. Vote: Sevoyan Funds Request
 - b. ZBA; Thorndike Place Complex
 - c. New Board Member onboarding materials
 - d. Location of June Board meeting; Nominations in June for Board Secretary and Minuteman Liaison
10. Other Community Announcements
11. Adjourn - **Next meeting: June 17, 2021**

Executive Director's Report

Kristine Shah

I. COVID-19 Vaccine Updates

- a. The COA staff has been working hard on vaccination outreach for age 75+. Outreach includes reverse calls to MSC database (2,500), reverse 911 call town wide (19,000), flyers posted in local apartment complexes, AHA Buildings, Assisted Living Communities; communications through local barber shops, religious groups, As of May 13, 660 residents age 75+ remain unvaccinated. Over 95% of residents age 65+ have been vaccinated. When we receive a call from a resident who needs their vaccine, we immediately schedule them an appointment (with our nurse if homebound, at our collaborative clinic in Medford with transportation or at a local pharmacy).
- b. Thanks to a grant from MAPC, we have been scheduling taxi rides for Arlington residents who secure a vaccine appointment outside of Arlington.

II. Updates on Programs/Services

- a. All 55 Chromebooks and 21 hot spots have been distributed to older adults in town as a part of our Technology Lending Library program. We have a waiting list established so residents can borrow the items once they have been returned.
- b. All though we are slowly beginning outdoor, in person programming in June, we are still going strong with our virtual programs and anticipate continuing them for the foreseeable future. Virtual programming in May and June includes nutrition seminars, Brains & Balance class, Elder Law information session, Virtual campfire with Boy Scouts, Expressive Arts, Memorial Day Music with John Clark, Stroke Awareness Talk with Mt. Auburn Hospital RN, Wang Theater virtual tour, Caregiver support group, low vision support group, LGBTQIA+ group, Intergenerational Book Club, Yarn & Yarn group, virtual SHINE appointments, virtual legal assistance appointments, Fitness classes, Singing group, Virtual Cooking class with Lahey Hospital and Decluttering group.
- c. Our podiatry clinic continues to be extremely popular and fills up monthly. Since October it has been taking place at the office of Dr. Dan Selligman in Medford (free transportation provided). Beginning in June and through the summer, it will be located outdoors, by the Whittmore Robbins House.
- d. June begins our in-person, outdoor program opportunities. We have reserved the Robbins Gardens daily, 10am-noon to host these activities. We will be starting slowly by offering yoga/chair yoga, Yarn & Yarn group, LGBTQIA+, and a weekly walking club. Attendees will need to preregister, wear their masks and social distance. Attendance will be capped at 10 people per program. If outdoor programming is successful, we will add on additional opportunities through the summer and in to the fall.
- e. Our Senior Property Tax Work off program and Harry Barber program are full with 25 participants and all have been accumulating their volunteer hours. Many volunteers have been helping us with vaccine outreach/scheduling and are lined up to help with our Lahey Farm share program which will start up again this summer. In the fall when our center reopens, we will have many new volunteer opportunities as greeters.

III. Age Friendly/Dementia Friendly

- a. We received a \$7,000 grant from I'm Still Here Foundation to begin offering virtual fitness classes for residents living with dementia and their caregivers. We have begun interviewing trained instructors who are a part of the Ageless Grace program.
- b. As one of our Dementia Friendly initiatives we are exploring the opportunity for a grant through AFD to provide Caregiver Support bags to caregivers of people living with dementia.
- c. Caitlyn Coyle from UMass Boston is providing us with a proposal for assisting us in writing our Age Friendly/Dementia Friendly combined action plan. We are looking for funding to cover this expense should we decide it is the best avenue to go. Additional listening sessions will be scheduled to cover topics that have become relevant since our 2019/2020 Age Friendly survey (COVID-19 impact, technology).

IV. Financial Updates

- a. COA Social Workers continue to see increased financial needs from residents. Our Sussman grant, COVID-19 relief fund, Sevoyan Personal Needs and our gift account have assisted residents throughout this difficult year. I will be presenting a request from the Sevoyan Fund in new business.
- b. Grant Updates
 - a. CDBG FY22: Transportation Program (\$31,540), Volunteer Coordinator Position (\$52,922) and Adult Day Health scholarships (\$6,000). – *approved by Department of Planning & Community Development*
 - b. FY21 Grants received: \$7K ISHF, \$22K Sussman, \$11,860 LHMC, \$28,880 from MAPC, \$3,400 Mass Service Alliance, \$5,000 Mt. Auburn Hospital,
 - c. Applying for annual Symmes grant (\$15K for transportation) in June

V. Capital Campaign/Renovation

- a. 15,000 piece mailing is currently being printed and will be mailed this month. This mailing highlights the COA's work during the pandemic and explains the need to finish our Capital Campaign strong.
- b. We are still planning for construction to be finished in September. As soon as the building is ready for tours, the board will be the first to have one scheduled
- c. The COA staff team met last month to specifically discuss racial equity and goals for the residents we serve. We are putting together a plan to have Cultural Humility onboarding training for all of our staff and volunteers. We also plan to begin translating our monthly newsletter in Mandarin, Spanish and Russian.

VI. Other

- a. Fall Fundraising: After speaking with the Board of Health, we plan to offer our 5K Race virtually again this year for those who would like to continue the tradition. In addition, we are exploring a fall event that would be more in line with COVID safety measures, such as a memorial rock garden established in memory of those we have lost since March 2020.

- b. ACMI continues to record our monthly show. Our June episode will feature an interview with outgoing ASA president, Malcolm Hamilton and an introduction of his successors, Claire Foley and Joanne Morel. ACMI continues to air senior fitness classes, cooking shows and relevant talks/programs.
- c. COA and ASA will meet over the summer to put a plan together for greeters/hosts/hostesses in the new Community Center, and calendar of programs and events that the ASA will be responsible for.

May 2021 Sevoyan Updates and Requests

As of March 31, 2021 the available balance in the Charles Sevoyan Charitable Trust is \$346,990.37.

Total Amount Requested - \$10,000

Sevoyan Dental

Request: \$0

Due to the pandemic, there were less dental appointments and less requests for financial assistance from this fund. We anticipate having available funds in this account without requesting more through the end of FY22.

Sevoyan Personal Needs

Request: \$10,000

The Council on Aging has seen a 15% increase in financial assistance for basic personal needs. The \$6,000 that was requested in September 2020 is depleted and we are requesting \$10,000 which will fund needs through the end of FY21 and through June 2022.

COA Social Workers request financial assistance from this fund for Arlington residents age 60+. There is a \$300 max benefit, per person, per year.

May 10, 2021

Via Email

Christian Klein, Chair
Arlington Zoning Board of Appeals
51 Grove Street
Arlington, MA 02476

**RE: ZBA Docket #3515 /Thorndike Place, Arlington, MA
Revised Project Concept Plans**

Dear Chairman Klein,

On behalf of the Applicant, I am submitting a set of revised concept plans for the Thorndike Place project. The Applicant has revised its project, consistent with feedback given by the Board as well as others during the public hearing process. The Thorndike Place project team looks forward to presenting the new design concept to the Board at the hearing later this week.

Within the enclosed set of proposed revised project plans, we have provided the Board with a sketch plan of the proposal, an updated site plan, front elevations of two townhouse styles, the garage plan, a first floor/entry related plan front elevations along Dorothy Road and sections through the townhomes and apartment building. The updated project perspective plan will be submitted at Thursday's hearing, but an illustrative 3D perspective drawing is provided with the enclosed set.

As a brief introduction to the revised plans: the revised project design reintroduces the duplex-style townhomes (6 duplexes/12 units) along the frontage of Dorothy Road, as had been originally presented in the 40B application. These residences will be home-ownership, which is likewise consistent with the original application. The apartment building has been both reduced in size and located farther away from Dorothy Road. The number of units in the building has been reduced by 46 units, from 172 units to 126 units. The total project would be 138 dwelling units, consisting of the 12 ownership units and the 126 rental units¹.

The revised proposal further addresses comments raised during the hearings regarding flooding of the garage structure or the first floor of the building. Under the prior plans, the garage level was established at Elevation 2.83. The current design has

¹ Upon the Board's closing of the hearing and issuance of a decision, should the Applicant be required to seek an appeal from the Housing Appeals Committee, it reserves the right to seek approval of the prior project proposal.

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revised the garage such that it is at Elevation 6. Likewise, the first-floor level of that building has been increased from Elevation 13 to Elevation 16.

In addition to the decrease in density, through these updated plans, the Applicant proposes to develop the apartment building for senior housing, which will include both independent living and assisted living. The need for elderly housing is identified in the Arlington Master Plan as an "issue and opportunity"; the Master Plan specifically states that "changing demographics will result in a growing number of Arlington residents over the age of 65 in coming years. The Town may not be able to accommodate all of its older residents on fixed incomes in the coming years." Master Plan, p. 88. The proposed dedication of the rental housing at Thorndike Place to be senior housing (independent living and assisted living) will advance Arlington's need to increase the supply for the aging population trend. This proposed change of residency in the rental building also translates into the need for less parking/less impervious parking surfaces. As shown on the enclosed plans, the majority of the parking would be located in the garage, with approximately 10 surface parking spaces. As a result of the reduced need for parking, the western portion of the property would be open to providing complementary landscaped amenities, such as gardens, outdoor benches and lawn area.

In closing, I wish to reiterate that we look forward to discussing these proposed changes to the project with the Board.

Sincerely,

/s/ Stephanie A. Kiefer

Stephanie A. Kiefer

Encl.

cc:

Paul Haverty, Esq.

Jenny Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development